● 563

[For information on Yakut peoples living in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, see AH6 Inner Mongolia, 1: Washington, category 116, pp. 117-118.]

6: Sauer--317 G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut
116, 167, 563

"I am induced to be so particular with regard to these rivers, [RCH: the Amur, Argoon, Tshukir, and Silempid Rivers] because they form a secure retreat to such Yakuti and Tungoose as are dissatisfied with their situations about Olekma, Yakutsk, the Vilui, and Ud. Here they enjoy the protection of the Chinese, and, I am told, have built several strong places: and, as they are very numerous, they form no inconsiderable advance guard to the Chinese frontiers.

In the year 1787, there migrated to China, from the districts of Olekma, Yakutsk, and the Vilui, more than 6000 Yakuti, with all their possessions (1).

1. This intelligence I obtained, in the house of the Ispravnik Mr. Hornofsky, from Messrs. Evers and Kyshkin, both assessors in the Russian service.

These migrations certainly reduce the number of Tartars tributary to Russia."

7: Shklovsky -- 72-73 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 563 697, 177.69 Russia
636.69

"The haillak [RCH: i.e., the transported Russian criminal] knows perfectly well that all is ended for him when he is once in Kolymsk; escape is impossible, for no human being can penetrate the polar forest, and to his exasperation is added a gloomy despair. He is sent to a Yakutian camp (Oulooss) and the Yakuts have to maintain him. They build a hut for him, give him a horse, supply him with meat, fish, frozen cream, tea--in a word, everything. In their reckoning each haillak costs the Oulooss ten or twelve roubles per month, and this, when the Yakuts themselves are obliged to live on bark, flavoured with a little sour milk, and when in the Verkhoyansk region they are obliged to eat field-mice so that they may not die of starvation. In order to protect their wives and daughters from the haillak, the Yakuts give him an orphan girl with whom to cohabit. Pitiable indeed is the plight of this wretched girl! Her terrible tyrant rules her with fist and cudgel, and her face is never free from bruises. The haillak so despises the Yakuts that, though he may live for years among them, the only word of their language which he will condescend to learn is 'give!.' Life under these conditions is equally intolerable on both sides. The Yakuts regard the haillak as vermin, as a savage, wicked beast that drains their life; as an evil satyr who will violate wives and daughters in the presence of their husbands [73] and fathers. On the other hand, the criminal forced to live among savages, who do not understand him, feels his position to be worse than solitary confinement. Finally, driven to desperation, he does something terrible in order to compel the

7: Shklovsky -- 72-73 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 563, 697, 177.69 Russia
636.69

authorities to remove him from this accursed region. While I was in the Kolymsk district one of these criminals, without any reason, threw the child of a small chieftain into a fire and held him there with an iron rod until he was burnt to death. Despair gave courage to the Ykkuts. They sprang upon him, bound him, and took him to Sredne-Kolymsk, and from there to Yakutsk, where he was sentenced to twelve years' hard labour."

7: Shklovsky --73 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 563, 697, 177.69 Russia
636.69

"Near Nijne Kolymsk there is a clan of eighteen Yakuts who have to maintain fourteen of these transported criminals. It is difficult to believe, but it is a fact that the entire clan are the slaves of the haillaks. The Yakuts give to each haillak everything necessary --draw-nets, nets, dogs, sledges, cetc.; the savages themselves, having no nets of their own, work for him, receiving for themselves only one-third of the total catch. Very often the haillak will trade all the things for drink, and then demand new ones."

7: Shklovsky --74-75 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut-1-2
116. 174, 563, 697, 177.69 Russia
636.69

"But what is the explanation of their abject fear of the haillak [RCH: i. e., the transported Russian criminal] and their subservience to him? One reason is of remote origin. The ancestors of the Kolymyan Yakuts were fugitive insurgents, who escaped after their defeat under Djennik, their leader. These people fled to Kolyma in deadly fear [75] after the horror of the suppression of the revolt. The ferocious tortures and executions of that time are still kept in remembrance by song and story from one generation to another. The Yakuts tremble at the mere mention of 'Russian,' and a haillak is to them the personification of all the cruel enemies mentioned in those terrible stories. The Yakut always calls him 'Tayon' (lord or master), and the haillak treats the Yakuts as his ancestors treated theirs, the poor savages enduring it all; indeed, they believe that the haillak is sent to them in order to make their lives bitter. That is one reason. Another is the absolutely unprotected condition of the Yakuts. The region is so vast that the solitary Russian official is unable to help them even if he wished to do so. It is terrible to speculate on the ultimate fate of these poor savages, when, as is probable, criminals will be sent in greater numbers to the remotest parts of Siberia. Then will the Farthest North-East be a veritable hell, where the groaning and torment of the wretched savages will never cease except with their lives.

Kind-hearted people tried to find out how to help a score or so of lepers-- a very laudable scheme--but perhaps kind-hearted people will also be found willing to find out

how to cure, not a few score,but the whole race of Yakuts of a not less terrible leprosy, which is eating away their morals and destroying their economic position; and the name of this leprosy is haillak."

7: Shklovsky -- 225 T-3 (1891-92) 1916 Yakut
116, 177, 563

"The Russian drivers in some villages have become almost entirely like the Yakuts among whom they live. They have narrow, slanting eyes, broad cheekbones, and hairless faces; and of Russian they know only a few words.

But ask your driver if he is a Yakut.

'No , I am Russian,' he will reply, with offended dignity.

The children of these settlers do not differ in any way from Yakuts."

9: Stadling--55 E-3 (1898) 1901 Yakut
116, 563

"On the other hand, the Russian settlers here [RCH: on the Buriatic Steppe] have to a great extent become 'Buriatised', as the Russians in Yakutsk have been 'Yakutised'. This is to be seen not only in physical changes of the Russian type--the dark colour of hair, eyes, and skin, and the Mongolian or Tatarian facial traits characterising the old Russian population in Siberia--but also in their habits and ideas. Thus, both here and in Yakutsk, the old Russian settlers and their descendants have forgotten their mother-tongue, and speak only the Buriat and Yakut languages, or some kind of mixed tongue. Their Russian orthodoxy has also become very much weakened, many of them cherishing stronger faith in the powers of the Shaman than in the ceremonies of the Russian priest."

17: Erman--260 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut
116, 178, 563, 437

" An old Russian, from the vicinity of Murom, who had been banished to Yerbinsk some fifty years before for homicide, complained to me, with laughable impudence, of the progressive improvement of the Yakuts. Formerly, these people paid for every pound of flour, with the finest furs, but now they hardly paid as much for a pood; and so it sometimes happened that they laid up a stock of flour, and then, in the winter, retailed it to the Russians. Indeed, when he first came here, every Russian passed with the Yakuts for a superior being,--they have even stood to salute him at a respectful distance; but matters were at last nearly come to that pass that he would have to bow to the Yakuts."

17: Erman--269-270 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut
116, 291, 171, 563, 177

"In the clothing of adults, there is manifested a strong predilection for bright colours, for the women in the house, as among the Buraets, wore clothes of green or other bright Chinese stuffs; while the men had on tight-fitting, short frocks, which closely resembled [270] the esquires' tabards in the middle ages. They were almost always made of white linen, with blue borders. At the lower end, behind, was a perpendicular slit, to prevent their incommoding on horseback. Even the fur caps of these people were covered with white linen, and adorned with squirrels' tails, and other black furs.

The few Russians who live at these stations to superintend the post, speak nothing but Yakutian among themselves, and are distinguishable from the indigenous population only by their greater length of face, their fairer complexion, and the comparative poverty of their clothing."

17: Erman--270 N-3 (1828-29) 1850 Yakut
116, 276, 563

"Mitléyev [RCH: one of the author's companions on his journey] gave vent several times to his horror at the Russians whom he met with at the places along this road, because being among the Yakuts, 'they had laid aside not only the Christian (i. e. the Russian) language, but also every Christian custom.' They ate, forsooth, during the most solemn fasts, of the most strictly forbidden kinds of meat, without any shame, and excused themselves only by alleging the want of fish in the Lena. In the lakes lying around there were carp in abundance, but they fell all to the share of the Yakuts. The Russian women here were as passionately fond of smoking tobacco as any of the fair natives. The pipes used by the Yakuts, both men and women, are so small that a few whiffs suffice to empty them. Their bowls are conical cups, of Chinese bronze, half an inch wide, and terminate below in a hollow and very thin cylinder, which is fixed into the wooden tube of the pipe. This is formed of two flat pieces of wood laid together, in each of which is cut half of the cylindrical canal. When properly joined they are tied round with a thin strip of leather, which makes them air-tight. These pipes have the inappreciable advantage of allowing the tobacco oil which settles in the tube to be collected; this, mixed with fine wood shavings, is then smoked a second time."

38: Dobell--41-42 G-2 (1812-13) 1830 Yakut
116, 563

"The Russian inhabitants of Yakutsk seem, indeed, to have adopted a number of the Yakut customs. At evening parties, between tea and supper, I have seen introduced frozen fish, sliced thin (called strogonina), frozen butter, [42] frozen cream, and dried beef, and have remarked that the ladies were particularly fond of them. In addition to those native delicacies, there are always two or three tables loaded with sweetmeats, dried fruits, cakes, and tarts, which are continually handed round during the evening, and I have often wondered how their appetites could last to conquer such heaps of food, and then crown all by eating a hearty supper. The first thing, however, that is offered to the guests is a glass of white wine each, and then the sweetmeats, &c."

40 : Burr--52-53 N-2 (no date) 1931 Yakut
116, 174, 192, 563

"One day when I was sitting on deck enjoying a pipe in the fine autumn air, regretting the fading glories of the golden-tinted forest, a young girl in a plain print frock stared inquisitively at me. She was well proportioned, small and slender and comely enough, with cheerful bright eyes and a dark complexion. As she stared at me I addressed her in Russian and said good morning. She answered in the same language in a pleasant voice and inquired, was I not a foreigner? The ice was broken, and I asked her about her people. Yes, she was a Yakut; they could all speak Russian nowadays except the trappers in the remotest districts.

'Are your people related to the Tartars?' I asked her.

'Yes,' she replied; 'we and the Tartars have one ancestor, but very many years ago we broke [53] off from them and migrated to our present home.' Their language has diverged from the Tartar, and they must have separated before the arrival of Islam in Central Asia, for they were Shamanists, though most by now are Orthodox Christians. She told me that many Russians learn Yakut and marry native women, and their children are more Yakut than Russian.

'How do you say " I love thee" in your tongue?' I asked her.

'Min taptighbwin,' she answered, which certainly sounded an uncouth medium for the tender passion. She then told me that she was studying medicine and was on her way home to Yakutsk on holiday. From all accounts she would have plenty of scope for her profession among her own people."

40: Burr--140-141 N-2 (no date) 1931 Yakut
116, 563

"Here I saw an unfamiliar element in the population - a few natives with oval features and almond eyes; they had the appearance of well-bred Chinese, though dressed in the roughest of rags and skins. I was told that they were the Tungus, whom I was [141] anxious to see; but these were all treated as Yakuts, as they had forgotten their racial identity and language and been absorbed by the stronger people. They were quite attractive in appearance, with a more refined type than the broad-faced Yakut."

40: Burr--150-151 N-2 (no date) 1931 Yakut
116, 191, 563, 874

"The two subjects most affected by the Yakuts for study are medicine and the law. The former is especially needed among this primitive people, now making its first hesitating steps on the road towards civilization. The first item in their education, of course, is the Russian language. They nearly all know this, except a few remote trappers, but as a rule they conceal their knowledge unless it is worth their while. [151] The Russians do not like them, perhaps from a little fear, calling them surly and untrustworthy, but the compliment is reciprocated."

45: Lesseps--202 T-2 (1788) 1790 Yakut
116, 231, 361, 563

"In about five hours we came again to the sea, which we left at a short distance from the village of Iné, where we arrived in the dusk of the evening.

This ostrog is thirty wersts from the [RCH: Iné] mountain, and is peopled by Russians and Yakouts, whose habitations are isbas [RCH: Russian-type dwellings made of wood] and yourts. They have the care of a stud of two hundred horses, which we had an opportunity of seeing, ten wersts from the village."

46: Cottrell--109 T-2 (1840) 1842 Yakut

116, 177, 563

"At no great distance from the Icy Sea there is a colony of Russians settled there since the first invasion of the country, principally on the river Ynedigyrka, who have adopted the mode of life of the Yakuts and Yukaghires, by whom they are surrounded. They live by fishing, and catching the different sorts of foxes with which those regions abound."

53:Tokarev and Gurvich E-4 (no date) 1964
RV2 Yakut RV2

and the Stalin farm in the Megino-Kangalasskiy Rayon. The first of these barely numbered 10 households in the 30's when first organized, but now unites 265 individual households. This collective farm has many different branches. It has 1200 hectares of ploughland, 3000 hectares of meadowland, 2700 hectares of pastureland, and upward of 3000 head of livestock. The collective farm has seven subsidiary farms for dairy-farming, horse-breeding, reindeer-breeding, poultry and pigs. Since 1953, fox and rabbit have been reared on it. The farm has two power stations. The electricity is used for purposes of illumination, threshing and cleaning the seed, grinding grain and sawing wood. An electric milking system for the cows is being introduced.

Well-designed houses, schools and hospitals have been constructed in the collective-farm settlement. It has its own club, library and radio-relay station. A park has been made near the settlement, and there is also a stadium. Films are shown regularly and amateur concerts are often organized.

The Stalin collective farm in the Megino-Kangalasskiy Rayon became the largest collective farm in the Republic as soon as the neighboring collectives merged with it. By government decree, it is the possessor of 67,000 hectares of land, of which 2798 hectares are ploughland, and almost 11,000 constitute meadowland and pastures. The remaining land is taken up by forests. The collective farm sows almost 800 hectares of wheat, 720 hectares of spring and winter rye, more than 250 hectares of oats and bareley, and 55 hectares of vegetables and potatoes. In 1955 there were about 3500 head of cattle on the farm, more than 1200 horses, 250 reindeer, and more than 100 pigs; furthermore, the collective farm has a subsidiary poultry farm and a section for breeding fur-bearing animals.

At the present time the collective farm has three small power stations with a total output of 125 kilowatts. The electricity is used for threshing grain, driving a sawmill and operating lathes. In view of the increased generation of electricity the farm has mechanized the delivery of fodder to the byres. There are more than 500 different types of machines, 6 trucks, 2 passenger cars and 12 engines on the farm.

In 1955, the farm's income was 2,700,000 rubles. The material status of the farmers has been considerably improved.

At the same time their cultural standards have increased.

There is not one single illiterate person on the farm: 120 farmers have a secondary education or higher, 10 of them are studying at universities and 165 in tekhnikums and secondary schools. Many of the collective-farm members return to their own farms after receiving their education.

Great progress has been attained by the northern farms of the Nizhne-Kolymskiy, Bulunskiy, Olenekskiy, Anabarskiy and other rayons. Their achievements are due to the overall reorganization of reindeer-breeding and the trapping industry. On many of the farms there are Yakuts, Evenks, Chukchi and other minorities all working together.

Socialization of the reindeer and the creation of large herds has made it possible to introduce such veterinary measures as stage-by-stage nomadizing based on the rotation of pastureland, inoculations, and day and night guarding of the herds. In the past Yakutiyan reindeer-herders never made use of dogs, which, for example, among the Nentsy make the work of the herdsmen easier. Nowadays reindeer-herding dogs are used extensively in the Nizhne-Kolymskiy, Allaikhovskiy and Bulunskiy Rayons.

The northern collective farms have not confined themselves to the traditional branches of economy, namely, reindeer-breeding, hunting and fishing, and are courageously developing new branches. On most of the

reindeer-breeding collective farms there are now dairy and horse-breeding sections.

The Stalin Even-Yakut collective farm in the Nizhne-Kolymskiy Rayon (formerly known as the Sutanya-Udëran) is successfully developing reindeer-breeding alongside horse-breeding, fishing and hunting. The collective contains more than 17,000 reindeer. In 1955 more than 850 tsentners of such important species of fish as whitefish and baranatka were caught. In 1955, 215,000 rubles worth of furs were delivered to the State. The gross monetary income of this collective farm was 2,430,000 rubles; 1,423,000 rubles were distributed to the collective-farm members for labor units, and for each labor unit the payment was 17 rubles cash, 1.04 kg of meat and 720 g of fish. The monetary income per household averaged 24,000 rubles.

Despite the fact that the chief branches of industry of the northern farms have required periodic migration on the part of the population, all the farms have constructed settlements or collective-farm centers. As an example we can take the settlement of Kolymskaya, the center of the Turvaurgin collective farm. This center contains the headquarters of the farm administration, an incomplete secondary school with boarding facilities, a hospital, a shop, a house of culture with a library, a trading station, a power station, bathhouses, a dairy farm, and 50 standard farmhouses. The farm recently acquired an S30 tractor, a launch and two motorboats. In ethnic composition the Turvaurgin collective farm is multinational and consists of Chukchi, Yukagirs, Yakuts and Evenks.

New Way of Life

A considerable obstacle in the way of the implementation of cultural and public-health program in Yakutiya between 1920 and 1930 was the scattered nature of Yakut settlements due to the ancient occupation of pastoralism. One, two or three yurts together was the predominant type of "settlement." The combining of them into larger units was further required by the everyday farming needs of collective farms.

The construction of settlements under Yakutiyan conditions was a major achievement in socialist reconstruction of the Yakutiyan countryside. It provided an opportunity for installing radio and telephone on the farms and providing them with medical and cultural-educational institutions. In 1950 the construction of settlements in southern Yakutiya was by and large complete. The farm settlements are usually located on elevated riverbanks or by the shores of lakes and consist of several parallel streets. Generally speaking, timber houses rather than yurts are built in these settlements. The center is reserved for the school, collective-farm administrative offices, medical center and club. On many farms yurts are used as work premises. There are quite a few settlements with power stations. In the Megino-Kangalasskiy Rayon alone there are 14 farm power stations with a total output of more than 510 kilowatts. Radio-relay systems have been installed in many of the new settlements. The farmers live in the settlements when they are not out working.

Although several types of farmhouses have been developed, they are still far from perfect. The rigorous climate makes particular demands upon the housing construction in Yakutiya. Special forms of heating are used in the new houses, such as triple frames—the first frame is a single one, while the second is inserted during the winter and has two panes of